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The World According to Andrew Young

by
Carl Gershman

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The World According to Andrew Young

Carl Gershman

ANDREW YOUNG is unquestionably a prominent figure in American politics today, and one of growing international importance as well. Before his remarkably rapid rise—owing largely to the role he played in Jimmy Carter's presidential campaign—Young served as Congressman from Atlanta's 5th District, and before that as Executive Director of Martin Luther King's Southern Christian Leadership Conference. In both these capacities he was known as a skilled negotiator—tough, but also conciliatory when necessary—and a racial moderate; he was the only black Congressman who voted to confirm Gerald Ford as Vice President, for example. It is only since his appointment as United States Ambassador to the United Nations that Young has seemingly gone out of his way to court political controversy and to adopt the provocative, outspoken manner that has become his trademark in office.

From the beginning, Young has seen that appointment as something more than just a diplomatic assignment. He has referred time and again to its symbolic significance, calling it a sign of America's racial progress and the harbinger of a new relationship between the U.S. and the countries of the Third World. He seems to see himself as a kind of diplomatic avenging angel, called upon to right the wrongs of past American foreign policy, to put the United States on the "right side of the moral issues in this world," and to "repair the damage" which was done during the years when America supported the "worst leadership groups" and became party to a "vast network of oppression" instead of siding with "oppressed peoples everywhere."

The torrent of controversy provoked by Young during his first months in office seemed designed to call attention to his new, crusading role and to the new American stance which it presumably symbolized. Conor Cruise O'Brien has observed that Young "knows how to be indiscreet and makes his indiscretions work in his favor," and this assessment is probably right. Though Young

outraged many people by calling Cuban troops in Angola "a force for stability," or advising Americans not to be "paranoid" about "a few thousand" Communist soldiers in Africa, or by hurling indiscriminate charges of racism at U.S. allies, adversaries, past Presidents, and even the borough of Queens, he also strengthened his credibility at the UN by saying such things and enlarged his popularity among many American blacks. Not long after Young took office, the Nigerian foreign minister called him the "symbol of a new and constructive United States policy toward Africa," and three leaders of the NAACP, including Roy Wilkins, praised him for speaking the "brutal, unvarnished truth" about racism in America and urged President Carter not to let the "enemies of racial progress" sway him from supporting Young.

President Carter has needed no such urging. He has been almost reverential toward Young, calling him the "finest elected official" and the "best man" he has ever known, as well as a "national treasure" and "Third World hero." Repeatedly, the President has made a point of affirming his "complete faith" in the way Young has gone about fulfilling his diplomatic responsibilities.* In token of all this, Young is the first U.S. Ambassador to have his own full-time staff on the seventh floor of the State Department—down the hall from Secretary of State Vance; he is the only U.S. diplomat permitted to engage in fund-raising activities on behalf of Democratic candidates; and his advice is solicited on many vital policy questions having nothing to do with Africa or the Third World. Carter's initial decision to stop development of the neutron bomb, for example, was reportedly influenced by Young, who feared that production of the bomb would make the U.S. position difficult to defend at the special UN session on disarmament.

* Young has been equally lavish in his praise of Carter. According to Young, the President is "free of racism" and "has the capacity as President of the United States to do more to put an end to racism than anybody since Martin Luther King." This is remarkable praise from Young, all the more so since Carter admittedly took no part in the civil-rights movement and used racially questionable tactics in his 1970 gubernatorial race in Georgia. But Carter is an avowedly repentant sinner and this may account for what *Newsweek* has called the "almost mystical friendship" between the President and Young.

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Is it then the case that the views which Young has been articulating so freely during his tenure at the UN reflect the policies of the United States government? Young himself suggests as much. Whenever he creates a furor, he defends himself by claiming first that his remarks have been taken out of context and, second, that they represent a fairly accurate reflection of policy—a policy that is in process of changing to become “much more in tune with the thinking of the rest of the world.”

Lately, of course, the President has been expressing views about the activities of the Russians and the Cubans in Africa that diverge sharply from those of Young. Nevertheless, it remains unclear whether or to what extent Young speaks for himself or on behalf of the administration. Whatever the answer to that question may turn out to be, Young's political attitudes, as represented by his public utterances during the year-and-a-half since he took office, do indeed, as he himself says, point toward a fundamental revision of American foreign policy—though a revision with very different moral implications from those he ascribes to it. Young's views may or may not be consonant with those of President Carter. But if they are, then the conception of human rights articulated by the Carter administration is a sham, put forward to disguise a rather cynical accommodation to a world in which Communist totalitarianism is the dominant reality.

TO UNDERSTAND Young's thinking, one must understand that all his political judgments are made from the vantage point of the American civil-rights movement of the 1960's. When an interviewer commented on “how often you interpret world events through your own civil-rights experience,” Young answered: “It's true. I mean, it's all I got. Everybody is determined by his own experience.” That experience, in Young's view, is relevant not only to America but to all sorts of countries and situations no matter how far removed they may be from the specific conditions that existed in the American South under segregation. Whether he is speaking in Lagos to a World Conference on Action Against Apartheid, or in Maputo at a conference in support of black nationalist movements in Namibia (South West Africa) and Zimbabwe (Rhodesia), Young continually draws a parallel between the struggles fought in the 50's and 60's against Jim Crow in the South and the struggle currently being fought against white minority rule in Africa.

And it is not only Africa that elicits this parallel. Young is no less hesitant in drawing comparisons between the American civil-rights movement and the current dissident movement in the Soviet Union. He has said for example, that the Shcharansky and Ginzburg trials “remind me very much of my own days in the civil-rights movement.” Repression in Mississippi, he has also said, “just made more people more determined,” and “[t]he

same things will happen in Russia.” Furthermore, “as the Soviet Union becomes more prosperous, as more and more people are exposed to any kind of art and culture,” especially through the medium of television, there will be a “human-rights explosion that will not be unlike our civil-rights movement.” Young's experience in the civil-rights movement even provides a model for his approach to the politics of the United Nations. Just as the black movement in the U.S. built a broad coalition for change, so too, he says, is it necessary at the world body “to build coalitions that cross racial and geographic and ideological lines.”

So central is the civil-rights movement in Young's scheme of things that he credits it with having started a “political revolution” that brought about a “radical reformation of American foreign policy.” In his speech to the Maputo conference in May 1977, Young explained to his African audience how the civil-rights movement evolved into the anti-war protest movement, which in turn created a “new approach to the problems we face everywhere in the world.” Thanks to this “new approach,” which grew “out of a concern for the end to racism, and an end to militarism and imperialism,” American foreign policy is now profoundly different from what it was during “the tragedy of the past twenty years,” when American tax dollars were used “not to develop, not to feed the hungry, but essentially as part of an apparatus of repression in many places on the face of the earth.” At long last, the cold war is behind us, and what used to be “an adversary relationship between East and West . . . is giving way to much more cooperation. . . .”

Of course, Young is aware that the transformation is not yet total. The U.S. still spends “close to \$100 billion a year [sic] on so-called military preparedness,” and many Americans still persist in seeing a “so-called ‘clear and present danger’” in Communism as a result of a “massive education campaign run by the government and private agencies.” But the outlook is improving. Americans are gradually coming to acknowledge the past racism of our government, and to recognize the truth of W.E.B. Du Bois's dictum that “the problem of the 20th century is the problem of the color line.” At a conference in Lagos against apartheid, Young noted approvingly that though much of the “imperialism, neocolonialism, capitalism, or what have you” of the United States is still present, the situation is in the process of being transformed by the Carter administration.

Given this general view of the world, it is not surprising to discover that Young sees no reason for the U.S. to oppose Communism militarily, or even to confront it ideologically. He simply does not believe that the Soviet Union and its allies pose a military or strategic threat to the United States. The whole question of the Horn of Africa, for example, is in Young's opinion vastly exagger-

ated, and he pronounces it "ridiculous" to find "this enormous strategic significance in a thousand miles of sand." Indeed, if there are strategic interests at stake at all in the Horn of Africa, the United States has only benefited from the Soviet action, for it will prove to be "the Soviet Union's Vietnam"—"the Russians have done more to hurt themselves than we could have ever done to hurt them."

Nor, according to Young, does the fact that Cuba is a Communist regime allied with the Soviet Union have any bearing on the situation. "Cubans are people," he said after Cuban advisers arrived in Ethiopia. "They might do good things. They might do bad things. Let's wait and see before we jump to conclusions." When asked on *Meet the Press* whether he was for, against, or neutral toward the Cuban presence in Africa, Young replied: "I think I would treat the Cuban presence just like I would treat the Israeli presence or the French presence or the American presence. I would ask the question: What are they doing?"

What, then, are the Cubans doing in Africa in Young's opinion? The answer has varied on different occasions, but always the motives imputed have been honorable ones. When the Cubans first arrived in Angola, Young thought that "they were essentially opposing racism, and driving the South Africans out"; later, when the civil war was over and the Neto regime installed in power, Young explained that the Cubans were "basically doing technical assistance," and in fact representing our own interests by protecting Gulf Oil's installations in Cabinda. Whatever their motives, crass political expediency was not among them: "I don't believe that Cuba is in Africa because it was ordered there by the Russians. I believe that Cuba is in Africa because it really has shared a sense of colonial oppression and domination."

It was only when the Cubans (for reasons not quite covered by Young's analysis) "used military means to try to resolve a conflict of Angolans themselves" that he was ready to condemn "that military role." But even while he expressed concern about "the continuation of death and destruction almost everywhere there is a Cuban military presence," he did not feel that any kind of U.S. military response was called for, and he continues to oppose any such response whether in Angola, in the Horn of Africa, in Zaire, or in Rhodesia. To reply with force would, in the first place, only compound the violence ("I don't think it's right for us to become a destructive force because they are a destructive force") and in the second place would never work "because the Soviets are willing to put so much more in weaponry into a situation in Africa," while "[t]he American people have sort of determined that our foreign policy for the near future, anyway, ought to avoid any military involvement in which the shores of the United States are not threatened." And this is all for the best, according to Young, since in any

case the U.S. "fares better in the world through peaceful economic competition wherever possible." "The sooner the fighting stops and the trading starts," he has declared, "the quicker we win."

If Young sees no strategic grounds for opposing Communist advances, neither does he see any moral ones, for he does not feel qualified to pass judgment on the Communist system of government. Concerning Angola, for example, he has said that "There's nothing wrong with their deciding to live under a socialist [sic] system," though he did not quite explain what "deciding" meant in this connection. He himself, as he once explained it, would not want to live in a place like Mozambique, for example, yet in the course of a visit there he "found that in the midst of that liberation movement there was in addition to the Communist social structure a remnant of humanism. . . . I say they are Communist but they are also humanist."

THE question of human rights, too, according to Young, is relative rather than absolute, in the sense that it is "understandable that people in different circumstances should have different perceptions of what human rights are." In a speech delivered at the Riverside Church in New York on Human Rights Sunday, Young urged Americans to broaden their definition of human rights to take account of these "different perceptions," and to understand that for the poor people of the world, the most pressing concern is overcoming poverty, not political freedom. In effect, therefore, "For most of the world, civil and political rights . . . come as luxuries that are far away in the future." Applying this "different-perceptions" theory to the Soviet Union, Young explained rather ingeniously how under that particular style of government, human rights—redefined, of course—have been preserved. In part, this appears to have been due to differences in climate:

. . . we must recognize that they are growing up in circumstances different from ours. They have, therefore, developed a completely different concept of human rights. For them, human rights are essentially not civil and political, but economic. . . . One lives in a land where, in most of that land, the sun sets as early as three o'clock in the afternoon, and where the planting season is minimal. Under those circumstances the struggle for human rights inevitably becomes far more economic in its expression than it would in a country such as ours, where we almost take it for granted that anything can grow almost anywhere year 'round.

But even the acknowledged defects of Communism do not grant us the right to judge it, in Young's opinion, because our own record on human rights is far from clean. While it is true that there is no political liberty in the Soviet Union, "We unfortunately have been very reluc-

tant to accept the concept of economic responsibility for all of our citizens." And while it is true that the Soviet Union represses its dissidents, "many of our own students were shot down on their own campuses" as a result of their political activities against the war in Vietnam. And even if we do not go in for literal torture, as some other countries do, the United States "still has subtle but very strong systems of intimidation at work that inhibit the possibilities of our poor, our discriminated against, and our dissidents, from speaking fully to address themselves." To illustrate this point, he has observed that a young black in America "is much more likely to go to jail and find himself abused there" than is a young white; and that the poor find it more difficult than the rich to gain adequate legal representation. No wonder, then, that at a meeting of the UN Commission on Human Rights, a body which includes some of the harshest despotisms on the planet, Young said, "I see my country as vulnerable as anybody else's around the table." He made a similar point during the Shcharansky trial when he said that there are "hundreds, perhaps even thousands of people whom I would call political prisoners" in the United States.

Young's willingness to give certain countries the benefit of the doubt extends even to Uganda. He acknowledges that there have been "massive violations of human rights and destruction of people" in that country, but is not sure how much violence is "done as a matter of government policy and how much is done as a result of an imminent kind of chaos." Then, too, Western nations have no right to be sanctimonious about Idi Amin, since they "contributed to overthrowing" the government of Milton Obote (a "left-leaning intellectual") and thereby paved the way for Amin's tyranny. Uganda, therefore, "is not just an African problem, [but] a Western one . . . a result of the excesses of both colonialism and neocolonialism."

There is, of course, a limit to Young's moral relativism. It does not extend to South Korea, Iran, Chile, the Philippines, or any of the other countries belonging presumably to that "vast network of oppression" to which we became a party in past years. Nor does it extend to South Africa, which Young has singled out from among all the countries of the world for unique moral condemnation. Here, for once, the question of human rights is paramount and there is not a trace of that hesitation to pass judgment which Young so frequently displays toward other governments that deny their citizens democratic rights. Here, and only here, "the whole conscience of the world is . . . on trial."

APPEARING ON *Face the Nation* on May 21, 1978, only a few days after Communist-backed forces invaded Zaire's Shaba province and had reportedly launched a major offensive in Eritrea, Young assessed the African situation: "I think our policy is doing very well," he

said, "and frankly, I think we are much better off in Africa now . . . than we have been for the last decade." Considered in light of the preceding week's events—and indeed, in light of events that have taken place over the entire period since Young and Carter took charge of our African policy—Young's reply was well-nigh staggering.

There are now Cuban military personnel and civilian "advisers" stationed in some fifteen African countries, most of them concentrated in southern Africa and the Horn, the two zones where military conflict on the continent is most intense. The 25,000-man Cuban force in Angola, which is financed by the Soviet Union at a rate of \$2½ million a day, is greater by one-quarter than it was when Carter took office, and serves the double purpose of securing the Communist hold on Angola and aiding pro-Soviet insurgents in neighboring countries. The Cubans guard the Cabinda oilfields (the source of yearly revenues of close to \$1 billion which keep the MPLA regime afloat); fight a continuing war in the countryside against the guerrilla forces of UNITA and FNLA (the two nationalist movements defeated in the civil war); and maintain order in the capital city of Luanda, where they put down an attempted coup in May of last year. From their Angolan base, the Cubans train SWAPO and ZAPU guerrillas in the use of Soviet weapons for an eventual takeover in Namibia and Zimbabwe. Here, too, they have trained and armed the Congolese National Liberation Front, the rebel group that invaded Shaba province this past May (the second such invasion in fourteen months) in an effort to topple the Mobutu government. In addition to the Angola operation, Moscow has also stepped up arms shipments to the Patriotic Front in Zambia and Mozambique, and flown groups of Malawian recruits to Cuba for military training. Reviewing these efforts in a joint communiqué issued on April 24, 1978, the Soviet Union and Cuba pledged to increase "assistance and support" to all the pro-Moscow insurgencies in the region.

In the Horn, 12,000 Cuban troops, 1,000 Soviet "advisers," and \$1 billion of Soviet weapons enabled Ethiopia to drive Somali forces out of the Ogaden desert in March of this year. Not content with this victory, and despite implicit assurances to Washington that the Somali withdrawal would be followed by "substantial reductions" in Cuban and Soviet forces in Ethiopia, Moscow soon sought to establish its control over the entire Horn. On April 9, just three days after Ethiopian President Mengistu returned from a hasty visit to Moscow, there was an abortive coup against the government of Somali President Mohammed Siad Barre, which Somalia charged had been instigated by the Soviet Union and Cuba. Not long after, Ethiopian troops backed by an enlarged Cuban force of 17,000 (and, according to Mengistu, backed also by forces from the Soviet Union, East Germany, and South Yemen) stepped up their offensive against the Eritrean secessionist movement.

IN SHORT, during the first year and a half of the Carter Presidency, two areas of considerable strategic importance—southern Africa, with its vast mineral deposits, and the Horn of Africa, with its proximity both to the vital sea routes through the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean and to the world's largest oil reserves in Saudi Arabia—have fallen under increasing assault from the Soviet Union and its allied forces. While all this has been going on, Young has retained his equanimity and urged Americans not to overreact, in accordance with his well-earned reputation in the Carter administration as a “cool-it person.” There have, however, been occasions when even Young has lost his equanimity. This happened, for example, when it was announced that an internal settlement had been reached in Rhodesia between the Smith government and three black leaders, Bishop Abel Muzorewa, the Reverend Ndabaningi Sithole, and Senator Jeremiah Chirau. Young was obviously taken by surprise and refused to believe it at first (“Our intelligence reports [said] that this would not happen, certainly not soon”). Then he went on to say that the settlement—which would guarantee the white 4 per cent of the population 28 per cent of the seats for ten years in a parliament elected by universal suffrage—would not work because it did not “address the issues that have some 40,000 people fighting” (the actual number is closer to 10,000). Comparing it to the “three or four internal settlements in Vietnam” which failed to stop the fighting there, Young predicted that the settlement would lead to a “black-on-black civil war,” followed by a “massive commitment of Soviet weapons.” He added that even if the U.S. and other Western countries recognized the new Salisbury government (which “would be very difficult”), such recognition would not mean much unless they were willing to send troops in to back it up, if necessary. “I don't think we are ready to do that,” Young concluded, thereby announcing in advance that the United States would abstain from any action in the situation, and virtually inviting the Soviet Union and Cuba to intervene.

Young is against the internal settlement, which envisions independence before the end of the year, free and fair elections open to all parties (including the guerrillas who would be encouraged to return and to participate on an equal basis in the new order), on the ground that it is insufficiently representative (though in fact it would be one of the most democratic states in Africa). Instead, he supports the Anglo-American plan which requires all parties to agree to a settlement—the white majority, the internally-based black groups, and the two wings of the Patriotic Front led by Joshua Nkomo and Robert Mugabe—after which a free election will take place to determine the composition of a new government. But this assumes, first of all, that both Nkomo and Mugabe really want

a free election—in which, most observers feel, they would not do very well—and secondly, that a consensus could be reached by all the parties involved not only about the terms for a settlement, but about a future democratic state as well. Hard as it was to reach a compromise between the white minority and the moderate black internal leaders, it is impossible to imagine a compromise between Ian Smith and Mugabe (who has said that there should be no amnesty for “war criminals”). It is also exceedingly difficult to imagine that a consensus could ever be reached between Mugabe, who has opposed multiparty democracy as a “luxury” and has called for a “one-party state,” and Muzorewa, the most popular of the internal leaders, who has called for a multiparty, multiracial, constitutional democracy with a bill of rights, an independent judiciary, and a “mixed type of economy.”

Indeed, the irreconcilability of these two positions, held by two black leaders, is an ironic commentary on Young's belief, which he has expressed so often at the United Nations and which is such an integral part of his total outlook, that the East-West conflict between totalitarianism and democracy has come to an end, and that race is the main dividing line in the world today. In fact, however, the decisive issue in Rhodesia is not the imperfections of the democracy envisioned by the internal settlement, or even the resistance to white minority rule, which the settlement would end. Rather, it is whether or not the future Zimbabwe will be democratic or totalitarian.

One need not accept Muzorewa's contention that Young has been “terribly brainwashed by the Patriotic Front and the so-called front-line states” to notice his clear bias in their favor. Indeed he has asserted, in a recent BBC interview, that “We are on the side of the front-line presidents in the Rhodesian situation.” In consonance with this, he has spoken of the guerrillas with extreme deference. “People who are engaged in negotiated settlements,” he told the Maputo conference in support of the Front, “hardly have the moral right to tell the people who are engaged in armed struggle how to run their paths and determine their freedom.” And in further token of his admiration, Young publicly implored “my brother Robert Mugabe . . . not to think of us in the same context as our involvement in Vietnam now in 1977.”

In adopting this ingratiating stance toward the Patriotic Front, and by opposing a course that would seek to strengthen its democratic opponents, Young is no doubt motivated in part by the wish to maintain his “credibility” with such Front supporters in Africa as Samora Machel of Mozambique, Agostinho Neto of Angola, and Julius Nyerere of Tanzania. At the same time, there is little to suggest, in light of his overall political point of view, that he would regard the installation of a Mugabe-type regime in Zimbabwe as cause for concern. Certainly it would be no more harmful

to U.S. interests, from his point of view, than a Neto regime in Angola, and it might even be helpful. After all, Rhodesia under Mugabe would be "stable," the U.S. could trade with it (importing its chrome, for example, without political embarrassment), and, like Mozambique, it might even be "humanistic" as well as Communist.

IN THE end, it is Young's apparent lack of commitment to political freedom, and his ability to turn a blind eye to oppression if it is carried out by African and other Third World regimes in the name of a progressive ideology, that is the most troubling aspect of his thought and of his performance at the United Nations. More is at issue than a mere disagreement over policy when Young finds it possible to assert, for example, that the "success" of Mozambique "makes East and West alike look to this nation with new hope and with new courage." Leaving aside the FRELIMO regime's disastrous economic performance, it would be an understatement to say that it has not respected the principle of majority rule, given the fact that Machel has pledged to "liquidate abrasive forces in the service of imperialism" and is currently holding some 100,000 people in forced-labor camps on suspicion of opposing the regime's policies.

And Mozambique is only one example of Young's indifference to the issue of political freedom in Africa except insofar as it pertains to the question of white minority rule. He has also spoken of the "impressive leadership" of SWAPO, the Namibian "liberation" movement, and conferred upon it the "Freedom Now" slogan, without, however, mentioning the arrest and detention in Zambia and Tanzania (under conditions marked by what the *New Republic* has called "unspeakable cruelties") of over 1,000 SWAPO dissidents, whose only crime was calling for a democratic party congress.

Young seems equally unconcerned about the fate of freedom elsewhere in the Third World, so long as the regime in question calls itself "progressive." On the very day that Young was welcoming Vietnam into the United Nations in the most lyrical terms, for example, the *New York Times* published an article by Henry Kamm containing extensively detailed accounts by refugees of the harsh political persecution which had led them to flee Vietnam by boat, at great risk to their lives. Young has expressed his admiration for "Vietnam's struggle for independence," and in a statement delivered by an aide in Bangkok this March, he observed, in an obvious reference to America's role in the Vietnam war, that "no part of the world has borne more tragic witness than Asia to the devastation of modern man's technology and intolerance of other socioeconomic systems." But nowhere in this speech about "basic human needs" did he mention the plight of the refugees from Communist Indochina or, for that matter,

the holocaust taking place across the border in Cambodia.

TO UNDERSTAND how Young can have evolved into an advocate of U.S. acquiescence in a new system of tyranny, one must again turn to the formative political experience of his life, the civil-rights movement of the 50's and 60's. In a sense, that movement was innocent about international affairs. Though influenced by, and in turn influencing, the anti-colonialist movements of Africa, the civil-rights movement never really had much interest in international questions. Justifiably preoccupied with solving problems in this country, it did not feel called upon to develop a perspective on American foreign policy, which during this period was concerned above all with the containment of Communism. To the degree that the issue of Communism impinged on the civil-rights movement, it did so in one of two ways: the opponents of integration sought to discredit the movement by calling it Communist, and the American Communist party, posing as a dedicated opponent of racial injustice, sought to use the movement to further its own political objectives. Neither attempt was new, and neither was particularly successful.* But perhaps inevitably, a tendency developed to view "the enemy of my enemy as my friend," and some in the civil-rights movement began to identify anti-Communism with opposition to racial progress and to view Communism as a sincere ally of the black freedom struggle. Young in his civil-rights days may have been influenced by this misperception of the role of Communism. Only recently he referred to Paul Robeson—an inveterate apologist for Stalinism—as "the hero of my youth," and he continues to see no contradiction between Robeson's defense of black freedom and his support for Stalinist totalitarianism.

Apart from all this, Young's insistence that the civil-rights movement in America can serve as a paradigm for such differing phenomena as the racial conflict in South Africa and the dissident movement in the Soviet Union reveals a parochialism that accounts in some measure for his failure to understand the nature of totalitarianism. It also accounts for his nonchalant attitude toward political democracy, whose virtues are difficult to appreciate fully without understanding what their absence would entail. In his *Reflections on Gandhi*, George Orwell wrote: "It is difficult to see how Gandhi's methods could be applied in a country where the opponents of the regime disappear in the middle of the night and are never heard of again. Without a free press and the right of assem-

* A full account of the long history of the relationship between the American Communist party and the racial protest movement in this country appears in Wilson Record's excellent volume, *Race and Radicalism: The NAACP and the Communist Party in Conflict* (Cornell University Press, 1964).

bly, it is impossible not merely to appeal to outside opinion, but to bring a mass movement into being, or even to make your intentions known to your adversary." Ironically, by looking at the world strictly in terms of his own experience in the civil-rights movement, Young not only misperceives different political situations, but also fails to understand why his own movement was able to appeal so successfully to the conscience of America.

The same parochialism which explains Young's failure to distinguish sufficiently between democracy and totalitarianism also accounts for his inability to see any distinction between authoritarian and totalitarian societies. Referring recently to the restoration of democracy in Portugal, Spain, and Greece, Young said that "totalitarian states and oppressive regimes fall suddenly and without much warning." He did not seem to understand that the right-wing regimes in these countries could be replaced as quickly and as smoothly as they were precisely because they were *not* totalitarian in the sense of controlling every aspect of human existence. For this same reason, the prospects for a democratic political evolution in South Africa—despite its perilous racial situation and its despicable policy of apartheid—are more hopeful than they are in the Soviet Union or Vietnam. To condemn this society more strongly than any other, as Young has done, bespeaks something less than a consistent moral standard on human rights.

BUT to attribute Young's political views simply to a naiveté born of a parochial view of the world is insufficient. His objection to anti-Communism, his denunciation of U.S. "militarism" and "imperialism," his opposition to the use of American military power under any circumstances, his readiness to justify Soviet despotism as a product of Russian economic backwardness or to blame Amin's tyranny on Western colonialism, his benignly relativistic attitude toward Third World dictatorships of the Left, in contrast to his absolutistic assurance about right-wing dictatorships—all these bespeak a political perspective that has much more in common with the New Politics movement of the past decade than with the civil-rights movement of the decade before that. This more recent movement has had an impact on American political culture no less far-reaching (though infinitely less constructive) than the civil-rights movement had on the nation's racial attitudes; and it now finds itself well represented in the Carter administration's foreign-pol-

icy establishment, especially among the younger members. In virtually every one of his political attitudes Young reflects the conventional wisdom of the New Politics and its two key ideas: that the East-West conflict has now given way to the North-South "dialogue," and that Communism does not constitute a threat to the West.

Obviously this point of view, with its downgrading of political freedom, is well calculated to make Young popular in a forum dominated, as the UN is, by member states which are not democratic. Just as obviously it is indispensable to the role Young wishes to play of chief intermediary between black Africa and the United States. Yet in his eagerness to demonstrate his solidarity with the new Marxist-Leninist elite of black Africa, Young finds himself today for the most part on the side not of the oppressed but of the oppressors. In Angola, for example, thousands of young people from rebel villages in the northern and central part of the country are being rounded up and shipped to Cuba's Oriente province where they are forced to cut sugar cane and undergo political indoctrination. At the same time, and in a far more comfortable setting, the sons and daughters of Angola's new ruling class are receiving technical and political training in Cuba's Isle of Pines at schools named after President Agostinho Neto. Here, in the division between slaves and slave masters, between the victims of the new order and those who rule over it, we have a true paradigm of revolutionary Africa.

President Carter has said that Andrew Young "has a great sensitivity about the yearnings" of Third World peoples, as well as an understanding of the reasons for their "animosities and hatred" toward the United States. "I think," said the President, "he's made great strides in repairing [the] damage that [has] been done." While it is no doubt true that Young has established friendly relations with some leaders who are otherwise hostile to America, he has done so at the expense of a retreat from the principles of liberty and democracy. Worse still, this retreat has involved a solidarity with totalitarian rulers in the Third World whose victims might well pray to be delivered from such "sensitivity" to their "yearnings." For their sake, as well as for our own, one can only hope that President Carter's recent warnings about Soviet-Cuban adventurism in Africa mean that Young is not the "point man" of this administration, as he has claimed to be, but rather the rearguard legacy of a political movement spawned by Vietnam and now on its way to being left behind.

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